

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/614,725

Examiner

Brian C Genco

Applicant(s)

KIDONO ET AL.

Art Unit

2615

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the amendment filed January 21, 2005.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-9.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 20 September 2004 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).**
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

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Claims 1-9 are herein deemed allowable over the prior art of record, the reasons for allowance are as follows:

In regards to claim 1 the prior art of record does not disclose nor fairly suggest an image pickup apparatus wherein said correction reference signal generation means referring to address information relating to defective pixels in the vertical optical black pixel portion of the image pickup device and using only non-defective pixels in the vertical optical black portion for generating said correction reference signal in combination with the other claimed elements.

Examiner notes that as presented in the previous Office Action that the prior art discloses to store address information of defective pixels on an image sensor and further to correct those defective pixels using neighboring pixels. As such, the defective pixels would be used in the prior art, namely the corrected defective pixels. None of the prior art of record disclose nor preclude to use only non-defective pixels, namely to ignore those pixel locations that are defective as described in the instant invention on page 14, line 22 – page 15, line 18 and page 18, line 16 – page 19, line 17.

Claims 2 and 3 depend from claim 1.

The reasons for allowance of claims 4 and 8 are substantially similar to that for claim 1.

Claims 5-7 and 9 depend from claims 4 and 8 respectively.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled “Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance.”

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Brian C. Genco who can be reached by phone at 571-272-7364 or by fax at 571-273-7364. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday thru Friday 8:30am to 4:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James Groody can be reached at 571-272-7950. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the customer service office whose telephone number is 571-272-2600.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Brian C Genco
Examiner
Art Unit 2615

March 29, 2005


TUAN HO
PRIMARY EXAMINER